

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MOSCOW 14128 181912Z

46

ACTION EB-11

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 MC-02 ACDA-19 SCI-06 SAJ-01

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C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 14128

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ESTC, UR

SUBJECT: INTOURIST COMPUTER SYSTEM LICENSE CASE

USDOC FOR SECRETARY DENT

1. AT SEPTEMBER 17 MEETING OF TOP-LEVEL US AND SOVIET TOURISM DELEGATIONS, FIRST DEPUTY CHIARMAN OF USSR FOREIGN TOURISM ADMINISTRATION A.A. RYABININ RAISED SUBJECT OF EXPORT LICENSE FOR IBM COMPUTER SYSTEM (TWO 370/158S) ORDERED FOR INTOURIST. RYABININ NOTED THAT UNDER CONTRACT SIGNED IN MARCH 1973, IBM WAS OBLIGED DELIVER FIRST CENTRAL PROCESSOR JUNE 1, 1974. HOWEVER, NO DELIVERIES HAVE TAKEN PLACE THUS FAR, AND RYABININ SAID THAT LETTER DATED AUGUST 15 FROM IBM OFFICIAL (ED LAW) HAD STATED THAT IBM WOULD PROBABLY BE UNABLE DELIVER ANY EQUIPMENT UNDER CONTRACT FOR 12-18 MONTHS. RYABININ POINTED OUT THAT SOVIETS HAD ALREADY UNDERTAKEN SUBSTANTIAL EXPENDITURES IN CONNECTION WITH PREPARATIONS FOR INSTALLATION OF IBM SYSTEM. HE ALSO POINTED OUT THAT INTRODUCTION OF IBM SYSTEM WOULD GRATLY IMPROVE INTOURIST'S HANDLING OF RESERVATION REQUESTS, A POINT WHICH SEVERAL MEMBERS OF U.S. DELEGATION HAD EARLIER STRESSED AS NECESSARY IF U.S. TOURISM TO USSR WERE TO EXPAND SUBSTANTIALLY. IN CONCLUSION, RYABININ SAID SOVIETS WERE LOOKING TO DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE FOR SUPPORT IN OBTAINING NECESSARY EXPORT LICENSE.

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PAGE 02 MOSCOW 14128 181912Z

2. RESPONDING TO RYABININ'S PRESENTATION, ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF COMMERCE WASHBURN, CHIEF OF THE US DELEGATION, SAID HE WAS FAMILIAR WITH THE INTOURIST EXPORT LICENSE CASE. INTOURIST CASE, HE SAID, WAS RECEIVING VERY HIGH LEVEL CONSIDERATION IN WASHINGTON, AND HE SAID HE WOULD LOOK INTO MATTER IMMEDIATELY UPON RETURN TO WASHINGTON.

3. COMMENT: RYABININ'S PRESENTATION BROUGHT INTOURIST LICENSE CASE OUT IN THE OPEN, AS WE HAD ANTICIPATED WOULD HAPPEN AT SOME POINT DURING VISIT OF TOURISM DELEGATION. SUBJECT IS LIKELY TO COME UP AGAIN DURING SUBSEQUENT TALKS. WHILE RYABININ DID NOT EXPLICITLY LINK INTOURIST LICENSE CASE AND US-SOVIET COOPERATION IN TOURISM AREA, RYABININ AND OTHER MEMBERS OF SOVIET DELEGATION MADE CLEAR THAT RESOLUTION OF THIS CASE WOULD HAVE IMPLICATIONS FOR OTHER COOPERATIVE PROJECTS INVOLVING TOURISM SECTOR.
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